

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 09638 031557Z
ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9867
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EINV, NI
SUBJECT: JEEP CORPORATION INTEREST IN NIGERIA

REF: A) STATE 190586; B) LAGOS 8719

1. PER REFTEL A, EMBASSY FEELS JEEP CORPORATION HAS A REASON-ABLE CHANCE TO BECOME ASSEMBLER OF 4-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES. IN CONVERSATION AUGUST 2, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIES, SENIOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OBIANWU SAID THAT FOUR COMMERCIAL ASSEMBLERS ONLY HANDLED VEHICLES IN THE OVER TWO-TON RANGE. HE SAID THAT THE FMG NOW REALIZED THAT IT HAD A GAP IN THE LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE FIELD. HE RECOMMENDED THAT IF JEEP CORPORATION HAD SERIOUS INTEREST, IT SHOULD PRESENT A WRITTEN PROPOSAL OR FEASIBILITY STUDY TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIES.

2. COMMENT: STATEMENT MADE BY MINISTRY OF TRADE OFFICIAL IN REFTEL B, CONFLICTS WITH OBIANWU'S UNDERSTANDING OF LEYLAND SITUATION. OBIANWU SAID THAT LEYLAND DOES NOT ASSEMBLE 4-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES OR OTHER LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, IT ONLY IMPORTS A FEW OF THEM. HE WENT ON TO PREDICT THAT LEYLAND WOULD BE THE FIRST ASSEMBLER OF COMMERCIAL

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VEHICLES TO BEGIN OPERATION IN EARLY 1979. SINCE OBIANWU IS DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH PRODUCTION ASPECTS, EMBASSY LEANS TOWARD INTERPRETATION OF OBIANWU OVER THAT OF MIN. OF TRADE OFFICIAL.

WYMAN

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